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A true and particular
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OF

The proceedings of the County of
SOMMERSET, for the settling the
Peace of the Kingdom.



BRISTOLL,
Printed by ROBERT BARKER, and JOHN
BILL, Printers to the Kings most Excel-
lent Majesty; M DC. XLIIII.

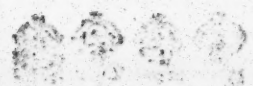
RELATION

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Majesty: MDCXLIH



A true and particular Relation of the
proceedings of the County of *Sommerſet*,
for ſetting the Peace of the
Kingdom.



A meeting of the Commissioners of the County of *Sommerſet*, at *Wells* the 5. of *October*, 1644. upon ſerious conſideration of the great Taxes and Payments, which had long layn upon that County, and the miſeries they ſuffered, by reaſon of the preſent War, and the diſability of the County to continue ſuch Taxes and Payments, they conceived, and upon debate reſolved, That the onely way to obtain Peace, and free the Countrey from thoſe Taxes and Payments, was for to joyn as one man and go along with the King towards *London*, and become Petitioners to the Lords and Commons of Parliament aſſembled at *weſtminſter* for Peace. Whereupon the Petition enſuing was preſented to His Majeſty.

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To the KING S most Excellent
MAJESTY.

The humble Petition of the Gentry, and Free-
holders, and others your MAJESTIES
Loyall and Protestant Subjects of your
County of SOMMERSET.

Most humbly sheweth,



That among the many miseries that
the present War hath brought up-
on them, it hath been a great com-
fort to them to see your pious in-
clinations to, and continued en-
deavours for settling Peace again,
and had hoped that your Majesties
gracious Messiges to that purpose, would have pro-
duced that desired effect; But not finding the successe
answerable to their expectations, and your Majesty
being now upon a March neerer towards London,
They humbly beseech your Majesty, That they may
have liberty to wait in person upon your Majesty, and
at a neerer distance of place, become Petitioners to the
Lords and Commons of Parliament assembled at
Westminster, to imbrace your Majesties gracious offers
of Peace, and put an end to the calamities of this di-
stracted and almost ruined Nation, with due care to the
preservation of the true Reformed Protestant Religi-
on,

on, your Majesties Rights & Honour, the Priviledges of Parliament, and your Subjects Liberties and Property, according to the Laws of this your Kingdom; And in case they may not obtain so just a request, they shall hold their lives best spent in assisting your Majesty to compasse that by the Sword, which by any other faire and just way could not be effected; to which end they desire Liberty to put themselves in Arms, and as they alwayes lived, shall rejoyce to dye your Majesties most loyall and faithfull Subjects.

To this His Majesty the 9. of *October* gave this answer, signified by the Duke of *Richmond* and *Lenox*; viz.

Sturmister, 9. Octob.



Am Commanded by His Majesty, to signifie to the Petitioners, That He well approves their hearty and loyall affections; and is graciously pleased to accept the free offer of their Service to him, with thanks, and gives them free Liberty to meet, and put themselves in Arms, according to their desire, and wait upon him, and doth freely give leave to them, to become Petitioners of the Lords and Commons of Parliament assembled at *Westminster*;

for composing the unhappy differences of this poor Kingdom in a peaceable way; and shall be glad to have the Petitioners, and all other his loyall and well-affected Subjects present with him, and be witnesses who is in fault if they be not presently restored to a happy Peace again. He hereby assuring them, That He will only insist upon the preservation of the true reformed Protestant Religion, His own known Rights, the Priviledges of Parliament, and His Subjects Liberty and Property according to the Laws of the Kingdom, and shall endeavour to have all these settled in a full and free convention of Parliament; And because he would not have the good intentions of the Petitioners frustrated, He wisheth them to take care to make such Provisions as may be necessary for their journey; and they shall not faile of His best assistance likewise therein. And His Majesty doth Command the Sheriffe of the said County to summon the *Posse* thereof or any other persons Inhabitants of the same, at such times, and to such places as the Commissioners shall thinke fit for the advancement of this businesse.

RICHMOND & LENOX.

Hereupon

Hereupon the Sheriffe summoned the County to meet at *Wells* on Munday the 14. of *October* 1644. and at that meeting the Commissioners and principall Gentlemen signed the Declaration following; and likewise published a draught of a Petition to be presented to the Lords and Commons of Parliament assembled at *Westminster*: Both which hereafter follow.



A Declaration of the County of Somerset, at a publike meeting at Wells the 14. of October, 1644.



Whereas we lately conceived very great hopes, That those many gracious Overtures from His Majesty to those at *London*, especially that from *Exeter*, and that from *Tavestock* (since his late successe) might have given a rise to such an happy Treaty as might have cleared those misunderstandings between His Majesty and His People, and consequently have put an end to those bleeding differences; But, contrary to our expectation, those gracious Messages have found either such cold reception, or such unsatisfying Answers, that they have been hitherto fruitlesse, and ineffectuall; we are resolved notwithstanding all our discouragements, by laying before them the calamities of the Kingdom, once more to invite them to the same sense thereof which we have; and as we have been

witnesses

witnesses of His Majesties gracious offers, so we will wait upon Him to be witnesses of His performance of them, being all of us such Persons, whom the Profession of the Protestant Religion, and our interest in the Liberties and Properties of the Subject obliges to have as tender a respect of the violation of these as any they can have: The sum of our resolution is, To follow His Majesty towards *London* as one man, either to propose to them, or receive from them, such Propositions as may restore this Kingdom to all the Comforts and Blessings of Peace; That having alwayes agreed in the same pretences, we may no longer make our selves the wonder of the present age, nor the amazement of the future, when they shall inquire Why so much blood hath been shed, there hardly appearing any difference even so much as in words.

And whosoever in this County shall refuse to accompany us, we shall look upon him as an Enemy to Peace, and shall proceed against him accordingly, not doubting (though we are the first who have undertaken unanimously to desire a concurrence in mediating this Peace) but that the universall Kingdom being involved in the same miseries, will either second or approve this our example; but if these our proffers of Peace can find no place with our Opposers, it will be then so evident by their refusall who are the Continuers, and by their continuing, the dispute will be so cleared, who were the Contrivers of these mischiefs, and consequently the Authors of all the miseries we have suffered, and from henceforth of whatsoever we shall suffer, that all men who have any bowels left towards their
bleeding

bleeding Countrey, any sense of Piety, any desire of Peace, or wearinesse of War, will joyn with us in following His Majesty, either to redeem the Kingdom from these miseries by an happy Victory, or our selves from them, by dying in the pursuit of it, and we doubt not but to have that blessing upon us which is promised to those that seek Peace and insue it.



To the Lords and Commons of
Parliament Assembled at
Westminster.

The humble Petition of the Gentry, Clergy,
Freeholders, and other HIS MAJESTIES
Protestant Subjects of the County of
S O M M E R S E T.

Though we have been very much discouraged from making any Addresses to you of this nature, by reason that those many made by His Majesty have been hitherto ineffectuall; Yet being moved, not onely by His constant and unwearied example, but by that most gracious Expression of His sense of our miseries in this particular, that He descends to suffer us to make an humble Overture of that for which in all equity He ought to have been petitioned by you: And believing that you,

B who

who have an equall share in the Sufferings, cannot but have an equall sense of the Calamities of the Kingdom ; We humbly offer to your Consideration, That we, who professe the same Protestant Religion, and have an equall interest in the Liberties and Properties of the Subject with you, cannot be so false to our selves, as either to give up that to Popery, or those to an arbitrary Government ; That as we come now to hazard our Lives with His Majesty, upon a well grounded belief of His Promises, so we will be no lesse ready to engage them in being Sureties for His reall performance. And therefore desire you to lay by the too tender sense of those imaginary Evils which you onely feare, and to joyn hands with us in an happy Treaty, for the removall of those reall Evils which we so sensibly suffer : And as we have alwayes met in the same professions, so we may at last meet in the reall performance of what we have so long profest, The maintenance of the Protestant Religion, The safety of His Majesties Person, and undoubted Rights, The Liberty and Property of the Subject, and the just Priviledges of Parliament.

These, with the Petition to the King, and his Answer being publicly read and communicated to the Countrey, were unanimously approved, and besides the Countrey delivered in writing as followeth, viz.

We the Gentry, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants of the County of Sommerfet this day met at Wells, have heard

heard the Petition to His Majesty and His Answer thereto, the Declaration and resolution of the Countie; and the Petition prepared to be presented to the Lords and Commons read we approve of all of them; we give the Commissioners thanks for their care of Vs; we desier they maybe published; and are resolved all as one man to go along and present the Petition.

Immediately after the Commissioners & Gentlemen fell to consideration of severall things necessary in order to their journey, as may appear by the ensuing resolutions.

At Wells the 14. and 15. of Octob. 1644. *Sommerfet.*

It was agreed by the Commissioners, and Gentlemen then present, in Order to their intended journey, in delivering their Petition to the Lords and Commons of Parliament assembled at *Westminster* as followeth.



First it is thought fit and Ordered upon the desier of the Countrey, assembled there the 14. of this Moneth, That the Declaration and draught of the Petition to the Lords and Commons then and there agreed upon be forthwith Printed in one

sheet of Paper with an Order underneath, that the Ministers and Curates, and in their default the Churchwardens and Side-men in every Parish within this

County do read and publish or cause to be read and published distinctly in their severall Churches and Chappels the next Sabbath day, after the receipt, the foresaid Declaration and draught of a Petition, both in the forenoon and afternoon, and subscribe the same themselves, and likewise take the subscriptions of all men inhabitants or residents within the Parish (of what age or condition soever without exception) unto the same, and take particular notice of such as refuse, or delay to do the same, & make certificates to the Commissioners at *Wells* on Thursday after the reading, at their perill, & then return the said Declaration and draught of Petition so subscribed. And if any be absent from Church, the Church-wardens to leave notice at their dwelling houses, that they repaire the next day to such place and at such houre, as the Minister or Church-wardens shall appoint, and there subscribe the same. And the said Ministers, Curates, Church-wardens and Side-men are likewise to certify a part, the names of all those that subscribe which are between the ages of 16. and 60. and to inform themselves by the Church-book of their severall ages, in case of doubt; and every Minister and Church-warden must give a note to the Messenger that brings it, and the very time of his receipt thereof.

2 That the Ministers in every Parish be desired to exhort the Parish oners, to joyn together in seeking and pursuing Peace, as a thing well pleasing to God, and the onely way to free them from the miseries of War which they have too sensibly felt of late, and to pray for a blessing upon the present undertaking.

3 That His Majesty be petitioned forthwith to remove all Souldiers whatsoever out of this County that
lye

lye upon Billet, or Quarter, except the Garrison Souldiers of the County, which are to be kept within their Garrison, and the Forces that are to block up *Taunton*, and such as shall be left behinde, by consent of the Countrey for preservation thereof till their return; and if they shall not obey the Kings directions therein, that the Countrey may have leave to remove them by Force.

4 That a Provost-Martiall be forthwith settled with foure Deputies, and 100. Dragooners to assist him, and to have a weekly pay, by an equall rate upon the County; and he to attend the publique Service of the Countrey, to apprehend all stragling Souldiers, and such as run away from their Colours, all Rogues and wandering persons, and execute such Orders, as he shall receive from the Commissioners for the good of the County.

5 That the Sheriffe of this County (with whom the Law hath intrusted the Peace and safety of it) be desired to take especiall care to preserve the Peace of the County untill their return, and to that purpose to be desired to keep strong Guards and Watches upon the severall passes night and day; and to enable him hereunto, he shall have a sufficient strength left behinde in a body under his command; and for the better performing this Service, His Majesty is to be humbly moved to continue the present Sheriffe in his Office till their return, and to draw his entire Regiment to him into the County.

6 If any person which goeth along dye in the Service, upon whose death any estate in Lands, Tenements, or Hereditaments are determinable, in cases where the person or persons are living, who held those

estates, other estates of the same Lands, Tenements, or Hereditaments shall be granted again to him or them to be determinable upon some other life or lives, as neere the age as may be of the person or persons deceased, under the like Rents, Conditions, & Covenants as were to be performed for the former estates. And where the person dying, held the estate determinable upon his own death, in such case an estate of equall value shall be granted to his Widow, Child, or Children in the same Lands, &c. upon such conditions as aforesaid; and whosoever shall refuse to do it, is to be accompted an unworthy member of his Countrey, and to be enforced by all due meanes to the performance thereof.

7 That for the better ordering of those who shall go in this Service for their own safety, and compassing the desired Treaty of Peace, it is agreed, That severall Colonels be made of the principall Gentlemen of the Countrey who are to go along in person, and undergoe equall hazard and hardship with their neighbours.

8 That if the Countrey shall not approve those Colonels, and shall name others in their places, they shall have free liberty therein to be approved by the Commissioners.

9 If any Gentleman in either Division will get a Company of Voluntiers, he hath free liberty to do it, and place himself under the Colonell of that Division.

10 That all Gentlemen of the Countrey that are not Commanders or Officers, have free liberty to put themselves in any Troop of this County that marcheth along.

11 That the King be petitioned, That such as go in this Service may not pay Contribution during the time they

they are out in their march ; and to command His Governours of Garrisons, upon pain of His highest displeasure, to observe the same, and to keep their Souldiers within their Garrisons , that they make no inroads into the County , or oppresse the Countrey-people in their absence.

12 That each person which goeth have provision of Bread and Ceele for six weeks , being for their march , stay, and return , that they may not oppresse the Countreys thorow which they passe. And the Constables and Tithing-men in each Hundred, Parish, and Tithing to take present care hereof, and of means for Carriage.

13 That those aged persons and Widows in each Parish that stay at home and are of abilitie , do make provision for the Wives and Children of such of the poorer sort whose husbands go along in the Service, and are unable to maintain themselves.

14 That the Colonels in their severall Divisions do take care to see their men have some kind of Arms (except such as go as Pioneers with Spades , Shovels , Pickaxes, Wood-hooks, or Hatchets) and the Colonels in every Division , with consent of the Commissioners , are to impose the finding of Arms upon all persons who are of ability , according to their severall abilities.

15 No man between 16 and 60. that hath leave to stay at home , if he be of an estate sufficient, but shall finde a Musket and Bandeliers at least, and more if his ability will extend thereto, according to the discretion of the Commissioners.

16 That every one in the County forthwith produce all their Arms, and if any conceale any Arms of any

any sort, or do not produce them, and also give present notice to the Colonell of the Division where he liveth, what Arms he hath, such a one is to have his person secured as an enemy to Peace, and dangerous to the safety of his Countrey, and all his goods and estate to be presently seized for the publike good of the County. And the form of an oath is to be presently framed by good authority to examine all persons that shall conceale any Arms or know thereof. But the Commissioners do hereby undertake that no person shall have any Arms taken from him against his will, which he shall produce and bring forth, but keep the same as his own goods.

17 Whosoever refuse, or do not subscribe the Declaration or draught of Petition before mentioned, or being of the Laity, do not go along with the Petition (unlesse he hath leave to stay behind upon just cause to be approved by the Commissioners, or three of them) or shall come away without leave, his person to be presently secured as an Enemy to Peace & the good of his Countrey, and all his goods and estate to be presently seized for the good of the Countrey.

18 That the King be humbly petitioned that Prince *Charles* may be their Generall in this Expedition, and the Lord *Hopton* his Lieutenant-Generall.

19 That if His Majesty approve this humble request, the Lord *Hopton* be desired to give order and direction for any other thing he shall conceive necessary for their march and orderly proceedings.

At our next meeting, which, God willing, shall be at *wells* on Saturday next, we shall further consider and proceed in this businesse.

The

The 18. of October 1644. the Sheriffe of Wiltshire, and the principall Lords and Gentlemen of that Connty, taking notice of the proceedings of the County of Sommerfet, wrote to the Commissioners of Sommerfet-shire, declaring their approbation of the Declaration and Petition to the Lords and Commons of Parliament assembled at Westminster, and that they would joyn in the same course, and would presently acquaint the whole County of Wilts therewith, who, they doubted not but would unanimously joyn therein.

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